

are withdrawn from consideration.

Election/Restriction

Applicant acknowledges that claims 103-106 recite features for a heating element in the form of tubes so that they are grouped with species A1 and withdrawn from consideration.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102

Claims 61-64, 73, 75-80, 100-102, 107-108 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by *Onsrud* (US 2,593,691).

The examiner argues in regard to claim 61-63 that the prior art machine shows clamps and pressing platens with air cylinders to operate the pressing platens. The examiner also points out that the arrangement includes wood beams as pressing members laid in two layers transversely to each layer, as disclosed in col. 3, lines 59-72, and aluminum strips as pressing member on the upper clamping plate. The clamping platen has play to allow clamping platen to be seated even with varying thickness of the wood pieces, as disclosed in col. 5, lines 21-28.

In regard to claim 64, the examiner argues that the disclosed device includes heating elements on the clamping and pressing platens and that the pressing platens are movable in a direction transversely to the board (col. 5, lines 14-21).

The cited prior art reference U.S. 2,593,691 shows an automatic gluing machine which comprises a heating station and a loading station. The gluing machine has clamping platen B loaded by pressure cylinders 26 as well as work carrying platen A. The platens A and B cooperate for clamping the workpiece during gluing. The platen B is fastened by means of a hinge bracket 20 and pintles 19 on the pressure cylinder 26. The opening 21 of the hinge bracket is adjustable in the vertical direction in order to allow adaptation to workpieces of different width.

The adaptation to different width has nothing to do with loading pressing members independently from one another by a pressure force. The applied pressure force is the same - only the spacing to the work carrying platen can be varied to accommodate differently sized wood pieces. The structure of the clamping platen B is however rigid as will be explained in more detail in the following, and this rigid structure does not enable

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loading of the pressing members (strips 17) independently from one another against the board by the pressure force. The pressure force applied to the platen B acts on all of the pressing members (strips 17) in the same way.

The carrier platen A and the clamping platen B both include aluminum plates 12, 16 which are electrodes. By means of these electrodes, the workpiece can be heated by electrical energy alternated at a radio frequency. This produces heat in the workpiece for gluing.

The examiner's statement that the machine has wood beams as pressing members laid in two layers transversely to one another is incorrect. The examiner refers to col. 3, lines 59-72; this text portion describes the carrying platen A comprised of a composite structure including the aforementioned wooden beams 10, 11. These beams 10, 11 provide a platform for a cover sheet of aluminum plate 12. On top of the plate 12, the work engaging surface is provided which is comprised of aluminum strips 13 laid parallel to the crossbeams 11. The strips 13 and the plate 12 are secured by screws onto the beams 11 (see col. 4, lines 7-17). Thus, the beams 10, 11 form a wooden platform and not pressing members. The work engaging surface is formed of strips 13 engaging the work. The platform (10, 11) and the work surface 12, 13 together form a fixedly connected unit, and this structure, in turn, is connected fixedly to the table 1. The work carrying platen A is stationary and a part of the table. Its "pressure members" 13 are not moved or operated or loaded by the air pressure cylinders of the pressing device.

The clamping plate B has an aluminum plate 16 with aluminum strips 17 providing a work engaging surface (pressing members). These strips 17 extend transversely to the wood pieces forming the board (clearly shown in Fig. 4 - note that several end faces of the wood pieces are shown and that the strip 17 extends continuously and transversely across the wood pieces) and rest on the workpieces (Figs. 2 and 4). The strips 17 are securely fastened on the plate 16 and the sheet 15 by screws (see col. 4, lines 53-64). Accordingly, when the clamping platen B is pressed onto the workpiece, **all strips 17** are simultaneously pressed with identical pressure against the workpiece (board), and there is no possibility for the strips 17 to be loaded independently of one another against the board by a pressing force. All strips 17 are loaded by the same pressure due to their fixed

connection relative to the platen B.

In contrast to this, in the present invention the pressing members 27 of the pressing device are loaded independently from one another against the workpiece (board 12). Therefore, the feature of claim 1 "configured to be loaded independently of one another against the board (12) by a pressure force" is not anticipated or obvious in view of the cited prior art reference.

In regard to claim 62, it is respectfully submitted that Fig. 4 of the cited prior art reference shows that the strips 17 are positioned perpendicularly or transversely to the pieces of wood, not parallel to the pieces of wood. In contrast to this, claim 62 defines that the pressing members extend **parallel to the pieces of wood** and transversely to the feeding direction of the board. This feature is not anticipated or obvious in view of the cited prior art reference.

The features of claim 64 are also not disclosed or suggested by the cited prior art reference. The heating elements (electrodes) 16 and the strips 17 are fixedly connected to one another by screw connections (col. 4, lines 57-64). In the present invention, the pressure members 27 according to claim 64 are movable relative to the heating elements 9a.

Therefore, claims 61, 62, and 64 are not anticipated or obvious in view of the cited prior art reference, and allowability of the claims 61, 62, and 64 is respectfully solicited.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

Claims 74 and 81-99 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claim 74 has been amended to include the features of claims 61, 64, and 73 and should thus be allowable.

Claim 81 has been amended by incorporating therein the features of claim 61, 64, and 80 and should thus be allowable.

Claim 82 has been amended by incorporating therein the features of claim 61 and should thus be allowable together with 1st dependent claims.

CONCLUSION

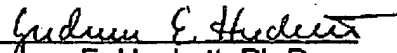
In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that this application is now in condition for allowance and such allowance is respectfully solicited.

As a result of the amendments to the claims, an additional independent claim is now present in the application. Please charge the required fee under 37 CFR 1.16 in the amount of \$42.00 to USPTO deposit account 501199.

Should the Examiner have any further objections or suggestions, the undersigned would appreciate a phone call or e-mail from the examiner to discuss appropriate amendments to place the application into condition for allowance.

Authorization is herewith given to charge any fees or any shortages in any fees required during prosecution of this application and not paid by other means to Patent and Trademark Office deposit account 50-1199.

Respectfully submitted on July 3, 2003,


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Encl.: - amended claims 74, 81, 82 (clean copies and marked-up version - 4 sheets);
- time extension petition (1 sheet)

CLEAN COPY OF CLAIMS 74, 81, 82

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74. (Amended) Bonding machine for lamellar pieces of wood (2) to be joined to a board (12), wherein the bonding machine comprises at least one clamping and pressing device (3) and at least one drive, wherein the clamping and pressing device (3) has at least two pressing members (27) which are configured to be loaded independently of one another against the board (12) by a pressure force;

wherein the clamping and pressing device (3) has heating elements (9a) and the pressing members (27) are movable in a direction transversely to the board (12) relative to the heating elements (9a) to a limited extent;

a common support (26, 37), wherein the heating elements (9a) are fastened to the common support (26, 37); and

wherein the support is comprised of two connecting plates (26, 37) which extend transversely to the feeding direction (8) of the board (12) and ends of the heating elements (9a) are fastened to the two connecting plates (26, 37).

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81. (Amended) Bonding machine for lamellar pieces of wood (2) to be joined to a board (12), wherein the bonding machine comprises at least one clamping and pressing device (3) and at least one drive, wherein the clamping and pressing device (3) has at least two pressing members (27) which are configured to be loaded independently of one another against the board (12) by a pressure force;

wherein the clamping and pressing device (3) has heating elements (9a) and the pressing members (27) are movable in a direction transversely to the board (12) relative to the heating elements (9a) to a limited extent;

a support (26), wherein the heating elements (9a) are fastened to the support (26) and are configured for receive tensile forces in the feeding direction (8);

noses (28) connected to the support (26) and positioned in front of each heating element (9a) at the inlet side of the clamping and pressing device (3).

82. (Amended) Bonding machine for lamellar pieces of wood (2) to be joined to a board (12), wherein the bonding machine comprises at least one clamping and pressing device (3) and at least one drive, wherein the clamping and pressing device

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cont¹

(3) has at least two pressing members (27) which are configured to be loaded independently of one another against the board (12) by a pressure force;
wherein the clamping and pressing device (3) has at least one pressing slide (13) configured to apply the pressing force onto the pieces of wood (2) of the board (12).

MARKED-UP CLAIM VERSION TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

74. (Amended) Bonding machine ~~according to claim 73~~, for lamellar pieces of wood (2) to be joined to a board (12), wherein the bonding machine comprises at least one clamping and pressing device (3) and at least one drive, wherein the clamping and pressing device (3) has at least two pressing members (27) which are configured to be loaded independently of one another against the board (12) by a pressure force;

wherein the clamping and pressing device (3) has heating elements (9a) and the pressing members (27) are movable in a direction transversely to the board (12) relative to the heating elements (9a) to a limited extent;

a common support (26, 37), wherein the heating elements (9a) are fastened to the common support (26, 37); and

wherein the support is comprised of two connecting plates (26, 37) which extend transversely to the feeding direction (8) of the board (12) and ends of the heating elements (9a) are fastened to the two connecting plates (26, 37).

81. (Amended) Bonding machine ~~according to claim 80~~, for lamellar pieces of wood (2) to be joined to a board (12), wherein the bonding machine comprises at least one clamping and pressing device (3) and at least one drive, wherein the clamping and pressing device (3) has at least two pressing members (27) which are configured to be loaded independently of one another against the board (12) by a pressure force;

wherein the clamping and pressing device (3) has heating elements (9a) and the pressing members (27) are movable in a direction transversely to the board (12) relative to the heating elements (9a) to a limited extent;

a support (26), wherein the heating elements (9a) are fastened to the support (26) and are configured for receive tensile forces in the feeding direction (8);

noses (28) connected to the support (26) and positioned in front of each heating element (9a) at the inlet side of the clamping and pressing device (3).

82. (Amended) Bonding machine ~~according to claim 64~~, for lamellar pieces of wood (2) to be joined to a board (12), wherein the bonding machine comprises at least one clamping and pressing device (3) and at least one drive, wherein the clamping

and pressing device (3) has at least two pressing members (27) which are configured to be loaded independently of one another against the board (12) by a pressure force;

wherein the clamping and pressing device (3) has at least one pressing slide (13) configured to apply the pressing force onto the pieces of wood (2) of the board (12).